

## AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An electrical contact material comprising a matrix made of conductive metal and an unstable fraction incorporated into this matrix, ~~characterized in that the said~~ unstable fraction ~~has~~ having the property of decomposing between the operating temperature of the electrical contact and the melting point of said metal, with the release of a gas capable of destabilizing an electric arc, ~~characterized in that said material includes, in addition, a~~ refractory fraction.
2. (Original) The material according to claim 1, characterized in that said metal is silver or copper.
3. (Currently Amended) The material according to ~~one of claims 1 and 2~~ claim 1, characterized in that said unstable fraction includes at least one hydride.
4. (Currently Amended) The material according to claim 3, characterized in that said hydride is based on at least one of the elements ~~chosen from the group:~~ selected from the group consisting of Ti, Zr, Hf, V, Nb, Mg, Ta, Cr, Mo, W, Fe, Co, Ni, La, and Y.
5. (Currently Amended) The material according to ~~one of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1, characterized in that said unstable fraction constitutes between 5 and 50% of its volume.
6. (Canceled).
7. (Currently Amended) The material according to ~~claim 6~~ claim 1, characterized in that said refractory fraction comprises at least one component ~~chosen from the group:~~ selected from the group consisting of CdO, SnO<sub>2</sub>, ZnO, Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>, Ni, Fe, W, Mo, C, WC and MgO.

8. (Currently Amended) The material according to one of ~~claims 6 and 7~~claim 1, characterized in that the refractory fraction and the unstable fraction constitute between 5 and 50% of its volume, the unstable fraction constituting at least 2% of said volume.
9. (Canceled).
10. (Canceled).
11. (Canceled).
12. (Canceled).
13. (Canceled).
14. (Canceled).
15. (Canceled).
16. (Canceled).
17. (Canceled).
18. (Canceled).
19. (Canceled).
20. (Canceled).
21. (New) An electrical contact material comprising a matrix made of silver and an unstable fraction incorporated into this matrix, characterized in that the unstable fraction including at least one hydride based on at least one of the elements selected from the

group consisting of Ti, Hf, V, Nb, Mg, Ta, Cr, Mo, W, Fe, Co, Ni, La and Y.

- 22. (New) The material according to claim 21, characterized in that said unstable fraction constitutes between 5 and 50% of its volume.
- 23. (New) Use of an electrical contact material in order to destabilize an electric arc occurring between two contact elements, one of them at least being made of said material, said material comprising a matrix made of conductive metal and an unstable fraction incorporated into this matrix, characterized in that the unstable fraction has the property of decomposing between the operating temperature of the electrical contact and the melting point of said metal, with the release of a gas.
- 24. (New) Use according to claim 23, characterized in that said metal is silver or copper.
- 25. (New) Use according to claim 23, characterized in that said unstable fraction includes at least one hydride.
- 26. (New) Use according to claim 25, characterized in that said hydride is based on at least one of the elements selected from the group consisting of Ti, Zr, Hf, V, Nb, Mg, Ta, Cr, Mo, W, Fe, Co, Ni, La and Y.
- 27. (New) Use according to claim 23, characterized in that said unstable fraction constitutes between 5 and 50% of its volume.
- 28. (New) Use according to claim 23, characterized in that it includes, in addition, a refractory fraction.
- 29. (New) Use according to claim 28, characterized in that said refractory fraction comprises at least one component selected from the group consisting of CdO, SnO<sub>2</sub>, ZnO, Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>, Ni, Fe, W, Mo, C, WC and MgO.

30. (New) Use according to claim 28, characterized in that the refractory fraction and the unstable fraction constitute between 5 and 50% of its volume, the unstable fraction constituting at least 2% of said volume.